4: Carawan & Carawan B,2-5 (1959-1988) 1989
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina
Johns Island

Mr. William Saunders

WHEN YOU FINISH THIS HIGH SCHOOL, YOU AREN'T PREPARED FOR ANY JOB

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Most of the kids that leave the island, I would say ninety percent of 'em go to New York. And to me, New York is about the worst place that any good youngster could go. They'll come back and tell you that they're living nice, everything is really nice. The young girls go away angels, have never had anything to do with a man, and they go away for about two years and come back with three babies. And a lot of the kids get to be addicts. Some of them do all right, come back driving big cars and really influencing the kids that are here to go away.

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The kids that get college education, it might help them individually but it sure doesn't help this island. It seems like they forget from where they came, or what they've suffered through, and the help that the rest of the people need. And our schools don't offer what the kids need to go to college anyhow. Yet our kids will get out of school and won't come back home to try to help the kids to get what they really need to even go to college. You can be an A-student here on the island, which don't take very much, and go to college and be a C-student or even flunk out.

When you graduate from this high school you aren't prepared for any job, except farming. You can't borrow no money from the bank to start a farm of your own, so they just prepare you to work on a farm here. They now offer typing, but like my first cousin was an honor student at Haut Gap and her teacher told her that she was too smart to take typing and shorthand. She tried to get into this new Technical Educational Center here and she couldn't get in. So now she's in New York. I know she's an angel, but what's going to be her fate? We don't know. She wrote back home and told her daddy, "Please make sure my brothers and sisters (she got about six or seven) get shorthand and typing." So her daddy bought a typewriter and got everybody in the house typing now.

Rev. G. C. Brown

IF WE COULD ONLY KEEP OUR YOUNG PEOPLE HERE

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If we could only keep our young people here, but now when they finish high school, most of 'em go. They don't stay here to help you develop things. They're looking for better wages—fact, they have to do that. There's

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nothing much for them to do here but cut cabbages or run a tractor, maybe drive a truck or do something in the field. And there's not much money in it for them.

They mostly go to New York and find jobs somehow or other—working as domestics or doing small factory work. Very few ever come back to live. They come back to visit about once a year. But they don't ever come back to live.

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